

Message Text

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45

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 IGA-02 EB-11 OMB-01

TRSE-00 AGR-20 SPM-01 IO-13 HEW-08 COME-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01

/211 W

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R 241305Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4330

INFO AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CT

SUBJECT: BOKASSA REMARKS TO DIPLOMATIC CORPS

1. PRESIDENT BOKASSA CONVOKED CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS
HERE LATE AFTERNOON SEPT 21 ON VERY SHORT NOTICE TO SPEAK
TO THEM ON TWO SUBJECTS: RESULTS OF HIS TRIPS ABROAD THIS
SUMMER SO FAR, AND ASSISTANCE FOR RECENT FLOOD DAMAGE
IN BANGUI.

2. BOKASSA GAVE BRIEF RESUME OF HIS TRAVELS TO WEST
GERMANY, FRANCE ROMANIA AND USSR. HE INDICATED HIS
PURPOSE IN TRAVELING ABROAD WAS TO SEEK RECOGNITION OF
AND ASSISTANCE FOR CAR'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. HE INDICATED
PLEASURE AT HAVING BEEN RECEIVED BY HIGHEST LEVEL OFFICIALS
IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND WITH GENERAL RECEPTION HE WAS
GIVEN. HE PARTICULARLY THANKED FRANCE FOR ITS ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE AND SOVIETS FOR THE HEALTH CURE WHICH THEY
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PROVIDED HIM IN THE CRIMEA LAST MONTH. HE ALSO THANKED

AMBASSADORS HERE FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN MAKING HIS TRIPS A SUCCESS.

3. BOKASSA THEN MADE AN APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS IN RECENT FLASH FLOOD IN BANGUI. FLOODING OCCURRED SEPTEMBER 12-13 AFTER UNUSUALLY HEAVY DOWNPOUR, DESTROYING HOMES IN SEVERAL AFRICAN QUARTERS OF CITY AND, ACCORDING TO BOKASSA, LEAVING SOME 13,000 PEOPLE HOMELESS. BOKASSA SAID THAT HE HAD NEVER ASKED FOR THIS KIND OF ASSISTANCE BEFORE BUT ON HIS RETURN FROM FRANCE LAST WEEK HAD FOUND THAT DAMAGE WAS MORE CONSIDERABLE THAN ORIGINALLY THOUGHT. HE SAID HIS GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO BUILD NEW QUARTER TO RESETTLE VICTIMS ON HIGHER GROUND, AND THAT VICTIMS WOULD REBUILD THEIR OWN HOUSES BUT MATERIAL WAS NEEDED TO ASSIST THEM TO DO SO. HE SPECIFIED THAT FINANCIAL AID WAS DESIRED.

4. COMMENT: FIRST PART OF BOKASSA'S SPEECH WAS CAST IN GENERAL TERMS. IN A SPEECH EARLIER IN THE DAY TO A GATHERING OF THE NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTY MESAN, BOKASSA REPORTEDLY INDICATED HE HAD OBTAINED PROMISES FOR ASSISTANCE IN REALIZING RAILROAD TO SEA AND ALSO ADDITIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TRAINING OF CAR CADRES. HE ALSO INDICATED WITHOUT NAMING NAMES HE HAD NEGOTIATED PROBLEM OF OBTAINING AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY TO IMPROVE CAR AGRICULTURE.

5. RE FLOODING, INFORMATION ON DAMAGE HAS BEEN SLOW IN COMING BUT IT NOW APPEARS THAT AT LEAST SEVERAL THOUSAND PERSONS WERE IN FACT LEFT HOMELESS. PRIOR TO THIS PLEA BY BOKASSA, GOCAR HAD ALREADY ASKED FAO AND WHO HERE FOR ASSISTANCE. WE AND OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ARE SEEKING FURTHER INFORMATION ON WHICH TO BASE DECISION TO PROVIDE HELP.
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